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Attn. Ms. Mary Adams
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
e-mail: mcentralcoast@waterboards.ca.gov

May 25, 2009

Re: Comments for the 2008 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments

Dear Ms. Adams

My name is Nadine Martins and I'm a citizen concerned about the well-being of our future. I got laid off in February from working for an environmental consulting company. The good thing about this is that now I have the time to write letters such as this one. Speaking to friends and neighbors I know many people who share similar concerns how human activities disrupt the health of our environment and ourselves but few can make the writing of a letter such as this one a priority in their busy lives.

Water quality is important to me because it's the basis for life and I feel horrible if the human species turns out to be a disease to our planet in which fight the planet ultimately wins by wiping us out. Believing in the fact that humans can do good (i.e. create music and languages, ability to reason and communicate, understand the principles of physics, quest to learn and explore) I would like human life to extend for as long as possible. I would hate to see if it turns out that humans are nothing but a parasite that will kill itself. Ecological, economical and social responsible management of water is of essence if we want to continue to prosper. I've been living in this community since 1994 so I've made my observations and experiences directly and indirectly by reading local newspapers (Santa Barbara Newspress, LA Times, The Independent, Coastal View and others), studying at SBCC and UCSB and working for local small and large businesses.

As long as our waters are not safe for drinking, fishing, swimming, none of the creeks and waterbodies should be removed from the 303(d) list, including our local creeks such as Carpinteria creek, Santa Monica creek, *Gobernador creek (to be added),* Franklin creek, Rincon creek, *Casitas creek (to be added),* Ventura river, as well as Carpinteria's El Estero Salt Marsh. How can the study of pathogen pollutants at Carpinteria creek – or any other creek near human settlements – be removed from the list when the potential for pathogen pollution exists? We walk our dog daily on the bluffs, across Carpinteria creek, where we encounter many other dogs as well as different types flea carrying rodents. Although we pickup after our doggies, there's still **potential of pathogen pollution**, by simply living in such close proximity of each other.

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I'm surprised why "**phosphor" isn't listed as a pollutant** when there must be phosphor in our waterways knowing that mainstream automatic dishwash soap still contains phosphates and is not (yet?) regulated as laundry soap is?

I'm also concerned about **inadequate or non-existing stormwater infrastructure**. It baffles me how primitive the storm water treatment here on the central coast is. Runoff is flowing untreated into the ocean and in many places, the drains along the street even lack a basic grid that collects solid waste such as styrofoam cups, plastic bottles, etc. not to mention all the non-solid pollution that gets flushed untreated into our watershed.

1. Drains straight to ocean without protective grid. Location: City Hall on Carpinteria Avenue, Carpinteria. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

2. Closeup of drain by City Hall on Carpinteria Avenue. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

3. Drains straight to ocean without protective grid. Location: Linden and Carpinteria Avenue intersection, Carpinteria. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

4. Closeup of drain at.Linden and Carpinteria Avenue intersection, Carpinteria. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

Then I find out that **some storm drains are connected with sewage pipes** that can overflow during high rainfall periods. That reminds me of medieval times in Europe pre-bubonic plague times when people didn't know any better.

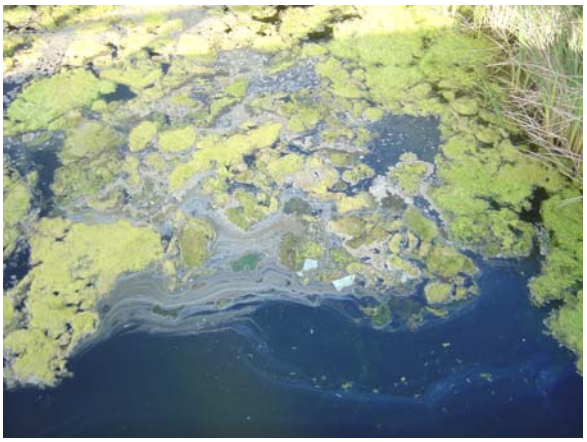
Given that the stormwater infrastructure is so archaic, I doubt that water treatment systems along the central coast apply the most advanced technologies in **sewage and drinking water treatment methods**. There is so much algae right next to the Carpinteria sewage treatment plant and I wonder whether the Carpinteria Water Sanitary applies the latest water treatment technologies to degrade harmful chemicals and phosphates. I accessed their website to get a better understanding of how their sewage treatment process works but I got stuck with an illegible treatment schematic http://www.carpsan.com/facilities/protect.htm#. They mention on their website that their treatment consistently exceeds state and national standards, which makes me wonder if state and national standards are adequate to today's time?

Carpinteria has many flower growers and farmers and I'm not sure if the draft 303(d) lists **all of the possible harmful chemicals stemming from pesticides and fertilizers** that are being used by local growers and farmers and how they are affecting local soils, groundwater and waterways. I have no idea if and how pesticides and fertilizer use is being monitored ensuring what chemicals are being applied and how much of it is being applied and how it's being disposed of. Also, **do we have proper incentives** in place that **encourage organic farming** and charge growers using pesticides and fertilizers more?

5. Fertilizer or pesticide tank located in monoculture agriculture field off of Bailard Avenue in Carpinteria. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

Since agricultural runoff might contribute to increased algal blooms resulting in occurrence of **domoic acid poisoning** among marine mammals and birds, I hope the local government does everything it can to monitor and prevent the entering of such harmful chemicals. Between 2000 and 2005 I have seen a couple of dying beached seals with disturbed posture and behavior.

Recreational activities such as swimming and surfing have become hazardous even in this town boasting "the world's safest beach" Carpinteria beach. It doesn't take a microscope to notice Carpinteria creek is polluted as algae blooms are chocking the water and oil films can be seen on the surface. Three of my close friends have gotten **bacterial ear and eye infections** right after swimming in the surf during or shortly after a storm. One of them had to be hospitalized for about a week with a severe bacterial eye infection.



6. Algae blooms seen from bridge near creekmouth in Carpinteria State Park. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

7. No fishing sign of Steelhead Trout on bridge near creekmouth in Carpinteria State Park. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

8. Algae bloom next to Carpinteria Sewage Treatment plant seen from bridge near creekmouth in Carpinteria State Park. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

9. Franklin creek concrete channel, Carpinteria. *(Photo by Nadine Martins on 5-26-2009).*

Although polluted, Carpinteria creek is one of the few creeks that doesn't have any major fish passage obstructions such as most other local creeks such as Franklin creek, Santa Monica creek or Rincon creek. So although there is a **no fishing sign at Carpinteria creek**, we do see plenty of **recreational fishing people on the beach nearby Carpinteria creek**. Which makes me wonder if a fish is lucky enough not to get killed by habitat destruction or pollution, and it is really close to swim upstream via Carpinteria creek, one of the last somewhat intact creeks, it might just get caught by a fishermen right before that. As if people cannot go into any supermarket and find every imaginable fish there. Speaking to divers who have been diving along the central coast, they've noticed considerable changes in decreased numbers and size of fish. I myself have noticed the difference of sea life abundance when diving around the Channel islands, where dive spots outside the Marine Sanctuary looked like a barren landscape and the Sanctuary had significantly more marine life.

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What is being done to deal with **micropollutants** that get into our waterways via our urine (polluted with pharmaceuticals such as birth control pills, aspirin, etc.) and **disrupt (reproductive) systems of aquatic life**?

I don't think we have the luxury of removing any waterbody from the 303(d) list and I question why other pollutants such as phosphates, specific fertilizer and pesticide chemicals and micropollutants are not currently listed? Major improvements in urban and agricultural runoff, stormwater infrastructure, sewage water treatment need to be made along with significantly reducing or eliminating household and commercial pollutants before we can remove any waterbody from the 303(d) list.

I understand we have a budget deficit but water is essential to life so let's please invest in it accordingly.

Thank you for considering and accepting my comments and thank you for all the improvements already made.

Please let me know if I can help in any way other than making conscious decisions in my everyday life that help preserve our waterways in the best possible way.

Sincerely,

Nadine Martins